Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators is the authoritative source for information on the state of education around the world. It provides data on the structure, finances and performance of education systems in OECD and partner countries.

Finland

- Finland benefits from more upward educational mobility and lower income inequality than other countries. **However significant gender differences in educational attainment and labour market outcomes still persist.**
- Between 2005 and 2015 enrolment in early childhood education in Finland increased among all age groups but the enrolment rate is still **lower in the early years** than in several other OECD countries.
- **Upper secondary enrolment is high and stable in Finland and participation in vocational education is among the highest in the OECD.**
- **Total expenditure on tertiary educational institutions has declined by 6% in Finland between 2010 and 2015, in spite of slightly increasing student enrolment.**

Figure 1. Trends in women’s earnings as a percentage of men’s earnings for full-time workers with tertiary education (2005, 2016) 25-64 year-old full-time workers

1. Earnings net of income tax.
2. Year of reference differs from 2016. Refer to the source table for details.

Countries are ranked in descending order of the earnings of 25-64 year-old women as a percentage of men’s earnings in 2016.


StatLink &gt; [https://doi.org/10.1787/888933802266](https://doi.org/10.1787/888933802266)
Gender plays a greater role in educational attainment and labour market outcomes than parental educational attainment

- Education plays a crucial role in reducing social inequalities, in particular through greater economic and social benefits. In Finland, 41% of 25-34 year-olds had attained a tertiary education in 2017, an increase of 2 percentage points since 2007, although this still remains lower than the average across OECD countries (44%). However 49% of this age group have an upper secondary qualification as their highest education level, 8 percentage points more than the OECD average.

- Inter-generational education mobility is high in Finland: 35% of adults whose parents did not complete upper secondary education have obtained a tertiary qualification, one of the highest shares across OECD countries. However the share of 18-24 year-olds without tertiary-educated parents is still lower among entrants to tertiary education (29%) than in the population overall (46%). Inequalities in educational attainment tend to lead to inequalities in employment opportunities. However, the earning advantage for higher educational attainment is lower in Finland than in other countries: those with below upper secondary education earn only 2% less than those with upper secondary education, the smallest difference across all OECD countries. Those with a tertiary education earn 41% more, compared to the OECD average of 55%.

- As in other countries, a larger share of women than men obtain a tertiary qualification in Finland, although the gender difference is greater than on average across OECD countries. This is mostly due to men’s participation increasing more slowly than the OECD average in the past decade: in 2017, 33% of 25-34 year-old men attained tertiary education, only a 2 percentage point increase over the 2007 level. In comparison, over the same period, the tertiary attainment of men increased by 8 percentage points on average across OECD countries, reaching 38% in 2017.

- Despite women’s greater participation in tertiary education, their employment rates are still lower than men’s and they tend to earn less for the same level of qualification: Those with a tertiary education earn only 77% of what their male counterparts earn, although this difference has fallen by 3 percentage points since 2005 (Figure 1).

- Continuing adult education helps provide adults with opportunities to bridge learning gaps that may have accumulated in initial schooling or to develop new skills relevant to the labour market. In Finland, 76%, of employed adults participate in these activities, a relatively high share compared to the average of 57% across OECD countries with available data. Participation in formal and non-formal learning activities is of particular importance for the integration of foreign-born adults. In Finland, there is only a 3 percentage point difference between the participation rate of employed foreign-born adults who arrived at the age of 26 or after and that of native-born or foreign-born adults who arrived by the age of 25, compared to 6 percentage points on average across OECD countries and economies.

Enrolment in early childhood education has increased in Finland but is still relatively low compared to other OECD countries

- Early childhood education influences cognitive and social development and constitutes an important foundation for later educational outcomes (OECD, 2017). Between 2005 and 2016, the enrolment of children in early childhood education and care (ECEC) settings in Finland increased for all age groups but is still lower than the OECD average. Among children under 2 years of age, 16% are enrolled in registered early childhood education in Finland, similar to the OECD average. Enrolment increases substantially among 3-year-olds, with 73% of children in Finland enrolled, although this is still lower than the average across OECD countries (75%). Comparing Finland with other Nordic countries, the enrolment rate among 2-4 year-olds in registered and unregistered early childhood education and care settings exceeds 90% in Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, whereas it is still below 80% in Finland. These differences don’t even out until the age of 6, when 98% of all Finnish children are enrolled in pre-primary education (ISCED 02).

- Enrolment in early childhood education often follows a social gradient whereby children from more affluent socio-economic backgrounds are more likely to attend in the early years. Finland shows a similar gradient, with 25% of children under the age of 3 from families in the lowest income tertile enrolled compared to 37% among those in the highest tertile, although this gap is lower than the average across countries with available data.
More than 80% of children enrolled in early childhood education and care in Finland attend a public institution compared to 46% in early childhood development programmes and 68% in pre-primary education on average across OECD countries. The child-to-staff ratio is often used as an indicator of educational quality in the early years. In Finland, there are 10 children for each teaching staff member in pre-primary education compared to 14 on average across OECD countries.

Increased funding at this level allows for a stronger provision of ECEC in Finland. Finland spends 1.2% of its GDP across its ECEC programmes, one of the highest shares across OECD countries, although spending still remains lower than in neighbouring Norway and Sweden. Spending has also increased in recent years: Between 2005 and 2015, total expenditure on pre-primary as a share of gross domestic product (GDP) increased by 0.2 percentage points to 0.9%.

Finland has one of the highest enrolment rates in upper secondary vocational education across OECD countries.

Upper secondary enrolment is high and stable in Finland, and students typically attend between the ages of 16 and 18 where enrolment is universal (>95%). However enrolment of 19 and 20 year-olds in upper secondary programmes is still high, with 35% of 19-year-olds and 20% of 20-year-olds enrolled at this level compared to 26% and 13% on average across OECD countries.

The higher enrolment in upper secondary among older age groups is due to Finland’s widespread vocational educational and training (VET) programme: 71% of upper secondary students are enrolled in such programmes, one of the highest rates across OECD countries. However the share of vocational students among first-time upper secondary graduates drops to 55%. This suggests that vocational students are less likely to complete the level than students from general programmes, but also highlights the important role of vocational programmes in continuous adult learning. Indeed, the average age of upper secondary students in Finland is 25, the highest across all OECD countries.

In the past decade, the first-time upper secondary graduation rates of students under the age of 25 increased from 85% to 89% in Finland. Graduation rates are similar for both programme orientations: 46% for general programmes compared to 43% for vocational programmes.
The share of vocational upper secondary students graduating from various fields of study is more balanced in Finland than across OECD countries on average. In 2016, most students from Finland graduated from vocational programmes oriented towards engineering, manufacturing and construction: 27% of graduates obtained a qualification in one of these fields, compared to 22% in health and welfare; 20% in services; and 17% in business, administration and law.

Spending on tertiary educational institutions has declined despite higher student enrolments in the past decade

Figure 3. Percentage of 25-34 year-olds with tertiary education, by level of tertiary education (2017)

Compared to other Nordic countries with available data, the distribution of tertiary students enrolled in public and private institutions is fairly even in Finland: 53% are enrolled in public institutions and 47% in government-dependent private ones. Annual total expenditure per full-time tertiary student on core educational services is USD 10 391\(^1\), similar to but slightly lower than the other Nordic countries with available data: for Iceland the total is USD 12 671, for Norway USD 12 120 and for Sweden USD 11 297. Although the number of students enrolled increased slightly between 2010 and 2015, total expenditure on tertiary institutions declined by 6% in Finland compared to an increase of 12% on average across OECD countries.

In Finland, national students, as well as students from the European Union or from the European Economic Area, pay no tuition fees. The government is the primary funder of tertiary educational institutions: In 2015, 93% of total expenditure on tertiary institutions was publicly funded compared to 67% on average across OECD countries.

Although tuition is free, living expenses can incur a non-negligible cost to students. Financial support to students for these expenses takes the form of scholarships and grants in Finland, which benefit 55% of students. While the public sector does not provide loans, it may guarantee private ones for education. Around half of the bachelor degree students in Finland are indebted at graduation with an average debt of USD 9 033. In contrast, while all tertiary students in Norway and Sweden benefit from a public loan, the average debt at graduation for bachelor students is over double that in Finland.

\(^1\) Values reported in equivalent US dollars (USD) have been converted using purchasing power parities (PPPs) for GDP.
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Note regarding data from Israel
The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and are under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.

Lithuania was not an OECD member at the time of preparation of Education at a Glance and is therefore not included in the zone aggregates mentioned in the publication. However this country note, produced at a later stage, includes updated figures for the OECD and EU averages including Lithuania and therefore may differ from the figures mentioned in Education at a Glance.

References


For more information on Education at a Glance 2018 and to access the full set of Indicators, visit www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance-19991487.htm.

Updated data can be found on line at http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-data-en and by following the under the tables and charts in the publication.

Explore, compare and visualise more data and analysis using: http://gpseducation.oecd.org/CountryProfile?primaryCountry=FIN&treshold=10&topic=EO.

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Country note author:
Kristina Sonmark
Directorate for Education and Skills
kristina.sonmark@oecd.org
### Key Facts for Finland in Education at a Glance 2018

#### Educational attainment of 25-34 year-olds by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2017</th>
<th>Finland</th>
<th>OECD average</th>
<th>EU23 average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% Men</td>
<td>% Women</td>
<td>% Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below upper secondary</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Earnings of 25-64 women relative to men, by educational attainment

| 2016 | Below upper secondary | 81% | 78% | 79% |
| Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary | 79% | 78% | 79% |
| Tertiary | 77% | 74% | 75% |

#### Participation of 25-64 year-olds in formal and/or non-formal education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2012</th>
<th>Finland</th>
<th>OECD average</th>
<th>EU23 average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% Men</td>
<td>% Women</td>
<td>% Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation of 25-64-born adults and foreign-born adults who arrived in the country by the age of 25</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation of foreign-born adults who arrived in the country at 26 or older</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Share of girls among repeaters in secondary general programmes

| 2016 | Lower secondary | 45% | 39% | 38% |
| Upper secondary | 4% | 42% | 42% |

#### Participation of women and men entering doctoral programmes by type of institution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2016</th>
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#### Share of female first-time tertiary graduates

| 2016 | Share of female first-time tertiary graduates | 57% | 57% | 56% |

#### Share of women and men entering doctoral programmes by field of study

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#### Percentage of upper secondary students enrolled in vocational education, by programme orientation

| 2016 | All vocational programmes | 71% | 44% | 47% |
| Combined work- and school-based programmes | 9% | 11% | 11% |
| Share of women among upper secondary graduates, by programme orientation | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |

#### Total expenditure on upper secondary educational institutions per full-time equivalent student, by programme orientation

| 2015 | General programmes | USD 8 425 | USD 8 981 | USD 9 235 |
| Vocational programmes | USD 8 587 | USD 9 831 | USD 11 115 |

#### Share of international or foreign students, by education level

| 2016 | Bachelor’s or equivalent | 5% | 4% | 6% |
| Master’s or equivalent | 12% | 12% | 13% |
| Doctoral or equivalent | 21% | 26% | 23% |
| All tertiary levels of education | 8% | 6% | 9% |

#### Share of first-time tertiary graduates by education level

| 2016 | Share of first-time tertiary graduates | 58% | 54% | 55% |
| Vocational programmes | 54% | 46% | 45% |

#### Employment rate of 25-64 year-olds, by educational attainment

| 2017 | Short-cycle tertiary | 82% | 81% | 82% |
| Bachelor’s or equivalent | 84% | 84% | 83% |
| Master’s or equivalent | 87% | 88% | 88% |
| Doctoral or equivalent | 97% | 92% | 92% |
| All tertiary levels of education | 85% | 85% | 85% |

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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table C1.1: Total expenditure on educational institutions per full-time equivalent student, by level of education (in equivalent USD, using PPPs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-primary</td>
<td>USD 9,305</td>
<td>USD 9,539</td>
<td>USD 9,852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>USD 10,482</td>
<td>USD 9,868</td>
<td>USD 9,982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>USD 10,991</td>
<td>USD 11,049</td>
<td>USD 10,999</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table C2.1: As a percentage of GDP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Share of expenditure on primary to tertiary educational institutions</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary (excluding R&amp;D activities)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table C4.1: As a percentage of total government expenditure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Share of expenditure on tertiary educational institutions by source of funds</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public expenditure</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private expenditure</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public to private transfers</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table D2.1: Teachers, the learning environment and the organisation of schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Lower secondary (general programmes)</th>
<th>Upper secondary (general programmes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table D3.1: Annual statutory salaries of teachers in public institutions, based on most prevalent qualifications, at different points in teachers' careers (in equivalent USD, using PPPs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Pre-primary</th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Lower secondary (general programmes)</th>
<th>Upper secondary (general programmes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>USD 29,578</td>
<td>USD 33,408</td>
<td>USD 35,081</td>
<td>USD 38,261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>USD 31,945</td>
<td>USD 40,991</td>
<td>USD 44,271</td>
<td>USD 47,789</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table D4.1: Net teaching time in public institutions over the school year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of teachers who are 50 years old or over</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-primary</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower secondary (general programmes)</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table D5.1: Average class size by level of education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Lower secondary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reference year is the year cited or the latest year for which data are available.
1. OECD average includes some countries with 2015 data.
2. For some countries, data on foreign students are provided instead of international students.
3. International expenditure is aggregated with public expenditure
4. Please refer to the source table for details on these data.

Cut-off date for the data: 18 July 2018. Any updates on data can be found on line at [dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-data-en](http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-data-en).